



Loudoun County, Virginia
Department of Fire, Rescue, and Emergency Management

803 Sycolin Road SE, Suite 104
Leesburg, VA 20175
Phone 703-777-0333 Fax 703-771-5359



March 3, 2011

Mr. Scott Ramsey, Mayor
Town of Round Hill
23 Main Street
P.O. Box 36
Round Hill, VA 20142-0036

Dear Mayor Ramsey:

I am in receipt of your February 22, 2011 letter. While I understand the Town's concern with water theft, in the interest of public safety I am still recommending that the decision to utilize locks on fire hydrants be reversed. Any lock that impedes or delays fire department access to water in a critical situation jeopardizes the public and places the Town in a situation of potential liability. Please understand that the County and the Round Hill Volunteer Fire Department will hold the Town directly liable for any damages, claims, judgments, or other injury that results from the Town's deliberate decision to impede and delay fire department access to water.

I realize that we have discussed Town locks and supplied keys as well as the use of the Knox system, but the fact is that the use of any lock will slow down public safety operations. Contrary to the assertion in your letter, our bolt cutters will be ineffective as they are not designed to penetrate hardened steel, which is the material from which the Master locks you possess are constructed. The halligan tool appears to be the only viable means by which we could defeat the lock, either by striking or prying, but these methods carry with them the very real possibility of damaging the locks and the hydrant itself.

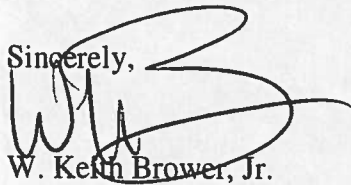
If the Town is unwilling to remove the locks, I am requesting that you donate three or four of them to our Department so that we may place them on a Town hydrant for the purpose of allowing Fire-Rescue staff to determine the best method of forced removal. Both possible methods, breaking the lock hasp or prying the device upward, assume a result in which the lock will be destroyed. If you agree to permit Fire-Rescue staff access to these locks and one of your hydrants for what amounts to "practice" in

Teamwork * Integrity * Professionalism * Service

removing them, I request that the Town provide oversight to these efforts. However, in any event, Loudoun County and the Round Hill Volunteer Fire Department is not, and will not be, held liable for the replacement of destroyed locks or any damage to the Town fire hydrants or control valves. In addition, we will also hold the Town responsible for any damage to County equipment used to conduct the testing or for removing the locks as necessary for normal fire department operations.

It is my hope that the Town will reconsider its decision in this matter.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'WKB', with a large, stylized flourish extending to the right.

W. Keith Brower, Jr.

Chief of Department

Cc: Board of Supervisors
Tim Hemstreet, County Administrator
John Sandy, Assistant County Administrator
Melissa Spring, Deputy County Attorney
Randall Shank, Deputy Chief
Jan Mitchell, Captain, FMO
Doug Rambo, Chairman, Fire and Rescue Commission